

Religions of Rome

VOLUME 2

A Sourcebook

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3 The calendar

The official state calendar was a central institution of Roman religion, and it was regulated throughout Roman history by the *pontifices*, one of the major colleges of priests. The sequence of religious festivals defined in the calendar created the basic rhythm of the Roman year. In some respects similar to the modern western calendar (in which the *religious* festivals of Christmas and Easter are also turning-points in the *secular* year), the Roman calendar organized the use of time, including the timing of public and secular business, through religion.

Calendars inscribed on stone or painted on walls were publicly displayed in Rome itself and in other towns. As we shall see in this chapter (and attempt to decode), they presented a vast amount of information in a highly schematic form. For the historian of religion, they not only indicate the dates of major rituals; but they also provide comments on the content and interpretation of those rituals – as well as indications (when compared over time) of the additions and changes to the sequence of festivals.

Besides the official, Roman state calendar, other calendars regulated the business and religious activities of particular local communities, army units or religious associations. These often drew on the official calendar, selecting some of its major festivals but adding notices and other information or rituals particularly relevant to the group concerned. They are important illustrations of local variations in religious practice.

This chapter starts from an explanation of the basic principles of the Roman calendar (3.1) and a reconstruction of the overall layout of the earliest surviving calendar from Italy (3.2). In 3.3 four versions of the month of April, drawn from different calendars, are compared – showing variations over time and in relation to the function of the calendar; while 3.4 and 3.5 are two calendars with very specific emphases – the calendar of a group of priests of the imperial cult, and of a unit of the Roman army. Finally, two calendars of the second half of the fourth century A.D. offer two contrasting images: 3.6, the development of a Christian calendar at Rome, focused on the commemoration of martyrs; 3.7 a slightly later calendar from Italy, still focused on (mainly local) traditional celebrations.

See further: Frascetti (1990) 5–41; Dupont (1992) 188–218*; Rüpke (1995); Beard (1991) on writing and religion; Markus (1990) 85–135 on time and Christian identity.

3.1 The Calendar and religious celebrations

Some Romans believed that their calendar went back to the time of Numa, who was credited with most of their religious institutions (1.2). The following passage from Macrobius is probably derived from a treatise on the calendar by Cornelius Labeo, writing in the second half of the third century A.D. It lays out the complex system of classification built into the Roman calendar, assigning different religious and secular functions to different days of the year.

See further: Mastandrea (1979) 14–73, with Mansfeld (1983).

Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1. 16.2–6

Numa divided the year into months and then divided each month into days, calling each day either ‘festival’, ‘working day’ or ‘half-festival’.¹ The festivals are days dedicated to the gods; on the working days people may transact private and public business; and the half-festivals are shared between gods and humans. Thus on the festival days there are sacrifices, religious banquets, games and holidays. The working days include ‘lawcourt days’ <fasti>,¹ ‘assembly days’ <comitiales>,¹ ‘adjournment days’, ‘appointed days’ and ‘battle days’. The half-festivals are not divided into subgroups, but each is divided into hours at which legal judgements may or may not be pronounced; for when the victim is being slain no legal business may be carried out, but in the interval between the slaying of the victim and the placing of the offering on the altar such business may be done, although it is again forbidden when the offering is being burned. We must therefore discuss more fully the division of days into festivals and working days.

The celebration of a religious festival consists of the offering of sacrifices to the gods or the marking of the day by a ritual feast or the holding of games in honour of the gods or the observance of holidays. There are four kinds of public holidays: either ‘fixed’, ‘movable’, ‘extraordinary’ or ‘market days’. In the fixed holidays all the people share; they are held on days in set and appointed months; they are noted in the calendar, and have fixed observances. The chief examples of fixed holidays are the Agonalia, the Carmentalia and the Lupercalia.² Movable holidays are those which are proclaimed annually by the magistrates or priests, to be held on days which may or may not be set days, for example, the *Feriae Latinae*³, the *Feriae Sementivae*, the *Paganalia*, and the *Compitalia*.

1. Each of these types of day is marked by different letters on the surviving versions of the calendar: see 3.2 (especially n.5). ‘Festivals’ are also of course marked.
2. See 5.2.
3. See 1.5 (introduction).

3.2 The republican calendar: Antium (84–55 B.C.)

This is the earliest surviving Roman calendar, painted on plaster, from a Roman *colonia* just south of Rome. Although not from the city of Rome itself,

it appears to copy very closely the official Roman calendar – reflecting (as we illustrate further below: 10.2) the close religious ties between *coloniae* and the mother city. We print here a partially restored version of the calendar; the original is fragmentary and some gaps still remain. The text shows how the calendar presented in a complex, coded form a considerable amount of information: not just on the names and lengths of the months and the character of the days (as described by Macrobius, 3.1), but also on particular religious festivals, their timing and location. The size of the original (1.16 by 2.5 m.) suggests that it was intended to be easily legible.

See further: Vol. 1, 5–8; Vol. 1, Map 5; Michels (1967); Dumézil (1968–73) III.331–7; Scullard (1981) 38–48*; R.L. Gordon (1990a) 184–8.

Degrassi (1963) 1–28

1. In the first column, a sequence of letters (A-H) marking eight-day periods with a market day on the ninth. For the seven-day week see 3.3d.
2. In the second column, letters indicating the (notional) lunar phases of the month: K (Kalends) on the first (the new moon); NON (Nones) on the fifth or seventh (the first quarter); EIDUS (Ides) on the thirteenth or fifteenth (the full moon). Dates were calculated by counting retrospectively and inclusively from these points: for example, 2 Jan. = 4th day before Nones of January; 26 May = 7th day before Kalends of June.
3. Abbreviated names of the months: IAN., FEB. etc.
4. Public festivals are given, abbreviated, in capital letters, e.g. LUPER (Lupercalia). The scheme of these major celebrations marked in capitals is thought to go back to a much earlier Roman calendar which predated the founding of the Republic.
5. Letters indicate the availability of the day for public business: F (*fastus*) signify days on which courts could sit ('lawcourt days', 3.1); C (*comitialis*) on which public assemblies could meet or courts could sit ('assembly days', 3.1); N (*nefastus*) on which no assembly could meet or court sit; NP (of uncertain meaning, perhaps *nefastus publicus*) with no courts or assemblies, and usually designating the great public festivals ('festivals', 3.1);

6. EN (*endotercisus*) marked a day which was N in the morning but F at other times ('half-festivals', 3.1).
6. Notations in small letters provide extra information concerning holidays, games, or the foundation dates and location of temples. E.g. Loed. Apol. (*Iudi Apollini*), 'games to Apollo'. Cf. 5.7 on games.
7. The number of days in each month. The total is only 354 days. The final month (the 'intercalary' month) was to be inserted when necessary to keep the calendar in proper step with the solar year. See 1.2.

3.3 The calendar of Rome: the month of April

There follow extracts from four calendars for the month of April, a month which happens to be well preserved in the extant calendars. These texts range in date from the first century B.C. to the fourth century A.D. and illustrate how the Roman calendar changed, especially in the imperial period – incorporating, for example, celebrations of the emperor and his family side by side with traditional festivals of the state.

We have added the modern days of the month in diamond brackets. For the main abbreviations see 3.2.

See further: Vol. 1, 5–8; Wissowa (1912) 574–5* (for convenient tabulation of these calendars; the whole book is invaluable for Roman festivals); Scullard (1981) 96–115* (for details of all the festivals recorded for the month); Wallace-Hadrill (1987).

3.3a Calendar from Antium (84–55 B.C.)

This is a fully restored version of the month of April taken from the Antium calendar (3.2).

ROL IV. 454–9; Degrassi (1963) 8–9

<1> A [K<alends of> AP]R<IL>. F	<13> E EIDUS. NP. To Jupiter Victor to Jupiter Libertas ³
<2> B F	
<3> C C	<14> F N
<4> D C	<15> G FORDI<CIDIA>. NP ⁴
<5> E NON. N. To Public Fortune ¹	<16> H N
<6> F N	<17> A N
<7> [G] N	<18> B N
<8> [H N]	<19> C CERIA<LIA>, N[P]. ⁵ To Ceres, Liber, Libera
<9> A [N]	
<10> B N	<20> D N
<11> C N. To Great Idaean Mother of the Gods ²	<21> E PARIL<IA>, N[P]. ⁶ Rome founded
<12> D N	<22> F N

<23> G	VINAL<IA>. F. To Venus Erucina ⁷	<27> [C C]
<24> H	C	<28> D C
<25> A	ROBIG<ALIA>. NP ⁸	<29> E C
<26> [B]	C	29 <days>

1. The anniversary of the dedication of one of the three temples of Fortune on the Quirinal Hill (Ziolkowski (1992) 40–5).
2. The anniversary of the dedication of the temple of Magna Mater on the Palatine in 191 B.C. (Vol. 1, 96–8). For the games (4–10 April) see Wiseman (1974) 159–69; 2.7a; 8.7a.
3. The anniversary of the dedication of the temples of Jupiter Victor vowed in 295 B.C. and Jupiter Libertas vowed in 246 B.C. (Ziolkowski (1992) 91–4, 85–7).
4. The festival of the Fordicidia involved the sacrifice of a pregnant cow (*fōrda*) to Tellus, the Earth, when the earth was heavy with the new crop; the theme of fertility was repeated in the Cerialia, four days later. The ashes of the calves were used to purify the people at the Parilia (5.1a).
5. The festival involved the sacrifice of a pregnant sow; the release of foxes carrying burning torches in the Circus Maximus; horse races, and a *lectisternium* at the temple. The one day of games in the Circus was preceded in the early Empire by seven days of theatrical performances; note the change of programme in 3.3d (Ovid, *Fasti* IV.679–712; Bayet (1951); Le Bonniec (1958) 114–23, 312–41). As the calendar also notes (in smaller letters), the temple to Ceres and her two children was dedicated on this day in 493 B.C.
6. A pastoral festival which was associated with the foundation of Rome (Vol. 1, 174–6; 5.1).
7. Although the Vinalia was said by many ancient authors to be a festival of Jupiter (see 3.3b n.10), Venus also was associated with the day. Two temples to Venus Erucina (Venus as worshipped at Eryx in Sicily) were (probably) dedicated on 23 April, in 215 and 181 B.C. (cf. bibliography in 3.3b n.10).
8. See 3.3b n.12.

3.3b Calendar from Praeneste (A.D. 6–9)

This calendar was inscribed on marble columns in the forum at Praeneste (modern Palestrina) south-east of Rome (cf. 4.9 for a reconstruction of the site; Vol. 1, Map 5), and it survives in a very fragmentary state (parts of January, March, April and December remain). The comments and interpretations of individual festivals are here much more detailed than in the Antium calendar. They probably derive from the work of Verrius Flaccus, ex-slave of Augustus and tutor to his grandsons, who wrote a scholarly commentary on the Roman calendar, and who may have come from Praeneste; they offer an important illustration of the ways individual festivals were interpreted in the early Empire.

Degrassi (1963) 126–33

[April is from] Venus, because she [with Anchises was the mother of Aeneas], the king [of the Latins], from whom the Roman people sprang. Others derive the word from ‘aperilis’, because in this month crops, flowers and animals, and the earth and seas open up <aperiuntur>.¹

- | | | |
|------|-------------|---|
| <1> | C | Kalends of April, F. Women in great numbers worship Fortuna Virilis, lower status women even in the baths, because there men bare exactly that part of their body by which the favour of women is sought. ² |
| <2> | [D II] II F | |
| <3> | [E I] II C | |
| <4> | [F] | Day before, C. Games to Great Idaean Mother of the Gods. They are called the Megalensia because the goddess is called ‘Megale’ <Greek for Great>. Reciprocation of dinners among the nobility habitually occurs in great numbers, because the Great Mother was summoned in accordance with the Sibylline Books and changed her place from Phrygia to Rome. ³ |
| <5> | G | Nones, N. Games to Fortuna Publica on the Hill nearer Rome. ⁴ |
| <6> | H | VIII NP. Games. Holiday because on this day Gaius Caesar son of Gaius [conquered] king [Juba] in Africa. ⁵ |
| <10> | D | [IIII], N. For two days the principal sacrifice is made to Fortuna Primigenia. On each day her oracle is open; the <i>duoviri</i> sacrifice a calf. ⁶ Games in the Circus. To the Great Idaean Mother of the Gods on the Palatine, because on that day a temple was dedicated to her. |
| <11> | E | [III], N. |
| <12> | F | Day before, [N. Games to Ceres]. |
| <13> | G | Ides, [NP. Games]. |
| <14> | H | XIIX, N. [Games]. |
| <15> | A | XVII, For[dicidia, NP. Games . . .] Oscan and Sabine [word . . .]. Aulus Hirtius, Gaius Caesar’s [colleague in power, won at Mutina, whence to] our day [one supplicates Victoria Augusta]. ⁷ |
| <16> | B | XVI, N. Games[. . .] |
| <17> | C | XV, N. Games. |
| <18> | D | XIIII, N. Games. |
| <19> | E | XIII. Cerealia NP. Games in the Circus. ⁸ |
| <20> | F | XII, N. |
| <21> | G | XI. Pa[rilia NP . . .] They leap over fires [. . .] At the beginning of the year [shepherds . . .] is restored. ⁹ |
| <22> | H | X, N. |
| <23> | A | IX Vinalia, F. To Jupiter [. . .] gave [. . . An offering of all the new wine to Jupiter] was dedicated. [When the Latins were hard pressed] by the Rutilians in war, because Mezentius king of the Etruscans demanded as terms, if he came to their assistance, an offering of wine every year. ¹⁰ Julia Augusta and Tiberius Augustus dedicated a statue to their father <i>divus</i> Augustus at the theatre of Marcellus. ¹¹ |
| <24> | B | VIII, C. Tiberius Caesar put on the <i>toga virilis</i> when the consuls were Imperator Caesar for the seventh time and Marcus Agrippa for the third <27 B.C.>. ¹¹ |
| <25> | C | VII Robigalia, NP. Festival of Robigo on the via Claudia at the fifth milestone, to |

prevent rust <*robigo*> from damaging the crops.¹² A sacrifice and games are held for both older and younger runners. It is a celebration for pimps because the previous day is for prostitutes.

- <26> D VI, F. *Divus* Caesar added this day to the calendar.
 <27> E V, C.
 <28> F VIII, NP. Games to Flora. Festival by decree of the senate because on this day [an image] and [altar] of Vesta was dedicated in the house of Imperator Caesar Augustus, *pontifex maximus*, when Quirinius and Valgius were consuls. On the same day a temple of Flora, who presides over the growth of things, was dedicated because of a failure of the crops.¹³
 <29> G III, C. Games.
 <30> H Day before, C. Games.
 30 <days>

1. The entry for April starts with a discussion of the etymology of the month's name.
2. This entry records women offering to Fortuna Virilis (the Fortune of Men) on 1 April. Other sources, however, suggest two rituals took place on that occasion: women of the elite worshipping Venus Verticordia (Venus 'who turned the hearts of women to chastity') and women of low status bathing in men's baths, wearing myrtle wreaths, perhaps in honour of Fortuna Virilis. Some scholars have suggested that this inscription (if only by a simple error of the stone cutter) has somehow conflated these two ceremonies (See Champeaux (1982–7) 1.375–95).
3. See 3.3a n.2.
4. See 3.3a n.1.
5. A festival in celebration of Caesar's victory at Thapsus in 46 B.C.; note that the calendar here suppresses the fact that this was (in part) a victory in civil war, over the Pompeian party, by mentioning only the foreign enemy, Juba.
6. 'Primordial' Fortune was the principal cult of Praeneste, and famous for its oracle. There was a temple in Rome to the goddess from 194 B.C., near that of Fortuna Publica, but the title of the magistrates (*duoviri*) and the mention of the oracle (not found in Rome) show that this entry relates to Praeneste (Vol. 1, 89; Champeaux (1982–7) 1.24–38).
7. See 3.3a n.4. Mutina was the first victory of Octavian against Antony in 43 B.C.
8. See 3.3a n.5.
9. See 3.3a n.6.
10. At the Vinalia new wine (*vinum*) was offered to Jupiter. The myth that partly survives in this entry was intended to explain the ritual (see also Ovid, *Fasti* IV.863–900). It depicted conflict between Aeneas, son of Venus, and Mezentius, leader of the Etruscans, who agreed to help Aeneas' enemies the Rutulians (under Turnus) in return for wine; Aeneas instead vowed the wine to Jupiter. It is a myth of sovereignty, rather than the opening of the new wine; there was a second Vinalia, on 19 August, which was associated with the growing vines and the announcement of the date of the grape harvest. For associations with Venus see 3.3a n.7 (Schilling (1982) 91–115, 248–62; Dumézil (1970) 183–6; (1975) 87–97, 105–7).
11. The entry was added early in the reign of Tiberius.
12. A dog and a sheep were sacrificed to Robigo. The fifth milestone may once have marked the boundary of Roman territory (Ovid, *Fasti* IV.905–42). Cf. Vol. 1, 45–7, and 2.2b for the deity Robigo.
13. Originally the festival of the bringing of the first ears of grain to the goddess Flora was of movable date (*feriae conceptivae* – see 3.1). In 238 B.C. a temple was built by the

Circus Maximus and the festival became fixed on this day. By the first century B.C. the games lasted six days, until 3 May (Ovid, *Fasti* V.183–378; Le Bonniec (1958) 197–202; Ziolkowski (1992) 31–3). The Augustan festival of Vesta was established on the same day in 12 B.C. (See Vol. 1, 189–91).

3.3c *Almanac from Rome (first century A.D.)*

This 'almanac' was inscribed on four sides of a large stone, with zodiacal signs (Aries for April) at the head of each month. It is quite different from the official state calendars. Although it notes a few festivals (here, for example, the Parilia), it does not include an entry for each day – recording instead information on the structure of the month and its days.

See further: Broughton (1936); translation of whole text in Sherk (1988) 253–6.

ILS 8745; Degrassi (1963) 288

Month of April.

Thirty days.

Nones on the fifth.

Day of 13½ hours;

Night of 10½ hours.

Sun in Aries.

Protector: Venus.

Sheep are purified.¹

Sacrifice to Pharia,
also the Sarapia.²

1. The Parilia, 21 April (3.3a n.6; 5.1).

2. Isis Pharia, named after the Pharos or Lighthouse of Alexandria. On the Serapeia (Sarapia) see 3.3d n.7. Probably, neither of these festivals were part of the 'official' calendar at this date (Vol. 1, 250–1).

3.3d *The Calendar of Filocalus (A.D. 354)*

This calendar, which forms part of a book presented to a senator in A.D. 354, records the public religious festivals of Rome; 3.6 is a Christian calendar in the same book. There are some significant changes from the earlier examples. The days for public business are no longer recorded (apart from two senatorial meetings). On the other hand, two extra columns of letters have been added: the first running from A to K marking the lunar cycle; the second, a seven-day sequence from A to G. This 'week' emerged from rural Italian contexts onto official calendars in the first century A.D. Also recorded is some astronomical information (Egyptian days; the Sun moving into the Bull); as well as festivals dating back to the republican and earlier imperial periods. This suggests (though it does not of course prove) that these traditional festivals were still being celebrated in fourth-century Rome.

See further: Vol. 1, 378–80, 382–3; Stern (1953); Salzman (1990)*; note also Salzman (1990) 242–5 on the Calendar of Polemius Silvius (A.D. 448–9).

Degrassi (1963) 245

Month of April

30 days

<1>	G	C	Kalends of April	Veneralia. ¹ Games. Stated meeting of senate.
<2>	A	D	III Nones	
<3>	B	B	III	Birthday of god Quirinus. ² Circus shows with 24 races. Egyptian day. ³
<4>	C	F	Day before	Megalesian games. ⁴
<5>	D	G	Nones	Games.
<6>	C	E	VIII Ides	Games.
<7>	F	A	VII	
<8>	G	B	VI	Birthday of Castor and Pollux. ² Circus shows, with 24 races.
<9>	D	A	V	Games.
<10>	B	D	III	Megalesian games. Circus shows, with 24 races.
<11>	C	E	III	Birthday of <i>divus</i> Severus. ⁵ Circus shows, with 24 races.
<12>	E	D	Day before	Games of Ceres. Circus shows, with 24 races.
<13>	E	G	Ides	Games. Stated meeting of senate.
<14>	F	F	XVIII May Kal.	Games.
<15>	G	A	XVII	Games.
<16>	A	B	XVI	Games.
<17>	G	B	XV	Games.
<18>	C	D	XIII	Games. Sun in Taurus.
<19>	D	E	XIII	Games of Ceres. Circus shows, with 24 races.
<20>	H	E	XII	
<21>	F	G	XI	Birthday of the city. ⁶ Circus shows, with 24 races. Egyptian day. ³
<22>	G	H	X	
<23>	I	A	A	IX
<24>	B	B	VIII	
<25>	C	C	VII	Serapia. ⁷
<26>	K	D	VI	Birthday of Marcus Antoninus. ⁸ Circus shows, with 24 races.
<27>	E	E	V	
<28>	F	F	III	
<29>	A	G	III	
<30>	A	H	Day before	Games of Flora.

1. Veneralia means a festival of Venus. See 3.3b n.2 for worship of Venus Verticordia on this day.
2. The birthdays and games were added to the calendar at some point after the early first century A.D.
3. Egyptian day: an astrological term, first attested in the fourth century A.D., of which little more is known.
4. See 3.3a n.2; 2.7a. Each month in this calendar is illustrated; the illustration for April (shown here from a sixteenth-century manuscript), which depicts a male dancing in front of an image of (perhaps) Attis, probably evokes the Megalesia (Salzman (1990) 83–91). Figure: c. 0.20 m. high.



For another illustration from this calendar, see 5.3b.

5. Septimius Severus, deified A.D. 211.
6. The Parilia is now referred to simply as the Birthday of the City; see 5.1c.
7. This festival may have been introduced in A.D. 217 with the building of a temple to Serapis on the Quirinal (Vol. 1, 383), but the festival is already found in the first-century A.D. almanacs (3.3c).
8. Marcus Aurelius, born A.D. 121.

3.4 A calendar from Cumae (A.D. 4–14)

This fragmentary calendar, inscribed on stone, from the South Italian city of Cumae, is very different in type from those given in 3.2 and 3.3. It records neither the days for public business nor the traditional festivals of Rome. Instead it has selected from the Roman calendar events in the career of the Emperor Augustus (here called 'Caesar') from his birthday in 63 B.C. and his assumption of the *toga virilis* in 48 B.C. down perhaps to the dedication of the temple of Mars Ultor in 2 B.C. (see 4.2); birthdays of members of Augustus' family are also recorded. The calendar may well not have been an official document of the town of Cumae, but specifically connected with the imperial cult – perhaps the calendar of the local *Augustales* (8.6).

See further: Fishwick (1987–) II. 1, 490, 509–10, 517.

ILS 108; Degrassi (1963) 279

<19 Aug.>	[XIII Kal. Sept.] ¹	[On this day Caesar] entered his first consulship. [<i>Supplicatio</i> . . .]
<4–22 Sept.>	[. . .]	[. . . On this day] Lepidus' army went over to Caesar. <i>Supplicatio</i> [. . .]
<23 Sept.>	[VIII Kal. Oct.]	Birthday of Caesar. <i>Immolatio</i> of animal to Caesar, ² <i>supplicatio</i> to Vesta.
<7 Oct.>	Nones of Oct.	Birthday of Drusus Caesar. <i>Supplicatio</i> to Vesta.
<18 Oct.>	XV Kal. Nov.	On this day Caesar put on the <i>toga virilis</i> . <i>Supplicatio</i> to Spes <Hope> and Iuventas <Youth>.
<16 Nov.>	XVI Kal. Dec.	Birthday of Tiberius Caesar. <i>Supplicatio</i> to Vesta.
<15 Dec.>	XVIII Kal. Jan.	On this day was dedicated the altar of Fortuna Redux who brought back <reduxit> Caesar from overseas provinces. <i>Supplicatio</i> to Fortuna Redux.
<7 Jan.>	VII Ides Jan.	[On this day Caesar] first took up the <i>fascēs</i> <i>Supplicatio</i> to Jupiter Sempiternus <the Everlasting>.
<16 Jan.>	[X]VII Kal. Feb.	On this day Caesar was named Augustus. <i>Supplicatio</i> to Augustus. ²
<30 Jan.>	[III Kal. Feb.]	[On this day the altar of Peace was dedicated.] <i>Supplicatio</i> to the <i>imperium</i> of Caesar Augustus guardian [of the Roman empire . . .]
<6 Mar.>	[Day before Nones Mar.]	[On this day Caesar] was appointed [<i>pontifex</i>] <i>maximus</i> . <i>Supplicatio</i> to Vesta, to the Penates the public gods of the Roman people, the <i>Quirites</i> .
<15 Apr.>	[XVII Kal. May]	[On this day Caesar won his first victory.] <i>Supplicatio</i> to Victoria Augusta.
<16 Apr.>	[XVI Kal. May]	[On this day Caesar was first] saluted [Imperator.] ³ <i>Supplicatio</i> to Felicitas of the empire.

<12 May>	[III Ides May]	[On this day the temple of Mars was dedicated??] <i>Supplicatio</i> to Mars' Moles <i.e. the Might of Mars>.
<24 May>	[VIII Kal. June]	[Birthday of Germanicus Caesar.] <i>Supplicatio</i> to Vesta.
<[. . .]>	[. . .]	[. . . <i>Supplicatio</i> to ???], Mars Ultor, Venus [Genetrix <Ancestress>]. ⁴
<[. . .]>	[. . .]	[. . .] <i>Supplicatio</i> to Jupiter.
<[. . .]>	[. . .]	[. . .]

1. The starting-point of this calendar is uncertain: evidently not 1 January, but some time in July or August.
2. Sacrifice directly 'to' the living emperor, rather than 'on his behalf' or 'for his well being', would have implied his divinity and would thus have been unacceptable in the official religious practices of the city of Rome: Vol. 1, 208–10.
3. It was an ancient Roman practice for troops to acclaim a victorious general as 'Imperator'. In addition, the word became established as part of imperial nomenclature.
4. The date does not correspond to the dates for sacrifices to Mars Ultor or Venus Genetrix at Rome, but could be the birthday of Julius Caesar (12 July). See Vol. 1, 199–200.

3.5 A military calendar from Dura Europus (A.D. 223–227)

This papyrus calendar of an auxiliary cohort of the Roman army, stationed on the eastern frontier, consists mainly of records of imperial anniversaries, from Julius Caesar to the reigning emperor Severus Alexander. Many of these are the same anniversaries as are recorded on official Roman calendars (3.3) or are celebrated in the written records of the Arval Brothers at Rome (4.5; 6.2) – suggesting that this calendar was dependent on a central Roman source. We give the dates of the imperial birthdays and accessions in diamond brackets, though the birthdays normally entered the calendar only once the person acceded to the throne.

See further: Vol. 1, 324–8; Fink, Hoey and Snyder (1940) give a detailed commentary.

Fink, Hoey and Snyder (1940); *Dura Final Report* v no.54; R. O. Fink, *Roman Military Records on Papyrus* (American Philological Association, 1971) no.117.

<1 Jan.>	Kal. Jan.	[. . .]
<3 Jan.>	III Nones Jan.	Since vows are fulfilled and undertaken both for the welfare of our Lord Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander Augustus and for the eternity of the empire of the Roman people, [to Jupiter Optimus Maximus an ox, to Juno Regina a cow, to Minerva a cow, to Jupiter Victor] an ox, [to Juno Sospes? a cow, . . . to Mars Pater a bull, to Mars Victor] a bull, to Victoria a cow [. . .]
<7 Jan.>	VII Ides Jan.	[Because honourable discharge with the enjoyment of

		<customary>] privileges [is given to men who have served their time] or <because> salary is paid [to the soldiers, to Jupiter Optimus Maximus an ox, to Juno a cow, to Minerva] a cow, to Salus a cow, to Mars Pater a bull [. . .]	<11 Apr.>	III Ides Apr.	For the birthday of <i>divus</i> Pius Severus <c. A.D. 145>, to <i>divus</i> [Pius] Severus an ox.
<8 Jan.>	VI Ides Jan.	For the birthday of the <i>diva</i> [. . .], to the <i>diva</i> [. . .] a <i>supplicatio</i> .	<21 Apr.>	XI Kal. May	For the birthday of the Eternal City Rome, [to the Eternal City Rome a cow.] ³
<? Jan.>	? Ides Jan.	For the birthday of Lucius [. . .] Caesar <c. A.D. 190>, [. . .] of Lucius [. . .] Caesar.	<26 Apr.>	VI Kal. May	For the birthday of <i>divus</i> Marcus Antoninus <A.D. 121>, to [<i>divus</i> Marcus] Antoninus [an ox.]
<24 Jan.>	VIII Kal. Feb.	For the birthday [of <i>divus</i> Hadrian <A.D. 76>, to <i>divus</i> Hadrian an ox.]	<7 May>	Nones May	For the birthday of <i>diva</i> Julia Maesa <c. A.D. 180?>, to [<i>diva</i>] Maesa [a <i>supplicatio</i> .]
<28 Jan.>	V Kal. Feb.	For the [. . . and] very great Parthian victory of <i>divus</i> Severus <A.D. 198> and for [the accession of <i>divus</i> Trajan <A.D. 98>, to Victoria] Parthica a cow, to <i>divus</i> Trajan [an ox.]	<? May>	VI. Ides May	For the Rose festival of the standards, a <i>supplicatio</i> . ⁴
<4 Feb.>	Day before Nones Feb.	For the accession [of <i>divus</i> Antoninus Magnus <sc. Caracalla>] <A.D. 198> a <i>supplicatio</i> , to <i>divus</i> Antoninus Magnus an ox.	<12 May>	III Ides May	For the circus games in honour of Mars, to Mars Pater Ultor a bull.
<1 Mar.>	Kal. Mar.	For the [birthday] ceremonies [of Mars Pater Victor, to Mars] Pater Victor a bull.	<21 May>	XII Kal. June	Because <i>divus</i> Severus was saluted <i>imperator</i> ⁴ by [. . .] <A.D. 193>, to <i>divus</i> Pius Severus [. . .].
<7 Mar.>	Day before Nones Mar.	For the accession [of <i>divus</i> Marcus Antoninus and <i>divus</i> Lucius Verus] <A.D. 161>, to <i>divus</i> Marcus an ox, [to <i>divus</i> Lucius] an ox.	<24 May>	VIII Kal. June	For the birthday of Germanicus Caesar <15 B.C.>, a <i>supplicatio</i> to the memory of Germanicus Caesar.
<13 Mar.>	III Ides Mar.	[Because] the Emperor [Caesar Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander] was saluted <i>imperator</i> <A.D. 222>, ¹ to Jupiter an ox, [to Juno a cow, to Minerva a cow . . .] to Mars an ox; because Alexander our Augustus was saluted <i>imperator</i> ⁴ [for the first time] by the soldiers [of the Emperor Augustus Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander <A.D. 222>, a <i>supplicatio</i> . . .]	<31 May>	Day before Kal. June	For the Rose festival of the standards, a <i>supplicatio</i> . ⁴
<14 Mar.>	Day before Ides Mar.	Because Alexander our [Augustus] was named [Augustus and Father of the Country and] <i>pontifex maximus</i> <A.D. 222>, a <i>supplicatio</i> , [to the Genius of our Lord] Alexander [Augustus a bull . . .]	<[9] Jun.>	[V] Ides June	For the Vestalia, to Vesta Mater a <i>supplicatio</i> .
<19 Mar.>	XIII Kal. Apr.	For the day of the Quinquatria, ² a <i>supplicatio</i> ; until 10 days before the Kalends of April. <23 March>, <i>supplicationes</i> .	<[26] Jun.>	[VI Kal.] July	Because our Lord Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander was named Caesar and clothed in the <i>toga virilis</i> <A.D. 221>, to the <i>genius</i> of Alexander Augustus a bull.
<4 Apr.>	Day before Nones Apr.	For the birthday of <i>divus</i> Antoninus Magnus <A.D. 188>, to <i>divus</i> Antoninus an ox.	<[1] Jul.>	[Kal.] July	Because Alexander our Augustus was designated consul for the first time <A.D. 221>, a <i>supplicatio</i> .
<9 Apr.>	V Ides Apr.	For the accession of <i>divus</i> Pius Severus <A.D. 193>, to <i>divus</i> Pius Severus an ox.	<? Jul.>	? Nones July	For the birthday of <i>diva</i> Matidia <c. A.D. 68>, to <i>diva</i> Matidia a <i>supplicatio</i> .
			<[10] Jul.>	[VI Ides] July	For the accession of <i>divus</i> Antoninus Pius <A.D. 138>, to <i>divus</i> Antoninus an ox.
			<[12] Jul.>	[III Ides] July	For the birthday of <i>divus</i> Julius <100 B.C.>, ⁵ to <i>divus</i> Julius an ox.
			<[23] Jul.>	[X Kal.] Aug.	For the day of the Neptunalia, a <i>supplicatio</i> <and> an <i>immolatio</i> .
			<[1 Aug.]>	[Kal. Aug.	For] the birthday of <i>divus</i> Claudius <10 B.C.> and <i>divus</i> Pertinax <A.D. 126>, to <i>divus</i> Claudius an ox; [to <i>divus</i> Pertinax] an ox.
			<[5 Aug.]>	[Nones Aug.]	For [the circus games] in honour of Salus, to Salus [a cow.]
			<[? Aug.]>	[? Kal. Sept.	For] the birthday of Mamaea [Augusta] mother of our Augustus <c. A.D. 200?>, to the <i>Juno</i> of Mamaea Augusta [a cow.]
			<[. . .]>	[. . .]	[. . .]

<? Aug.>	[? Kal.] Sept.	For the birthday of <i>diva</i> Marciana <c. A.D. 48>, [to <i>diva</i> Marciana [a <i>supplicatio</i> .]
<[31] Aug.>	[Day before] Kal. Sept.	[For] the birthday [of <i>divus</i> Commodus <A.D. 161>, to <i>divus</i>] Commodus [an ox.]
<[7?] Sep.>	[VII ?] Ides Sept.	[...]
<[...]>	[...]	[...]
<[18] Sep.>	[XIII Kal.] Oct.	For [the birthday of <i>divus</i> Trajan <A.D. 53?> and the accession of <i>divus</i> Nerva <A.D. 96>, to <i>divus</i> Trajan an ox, to <i>divus</i> Nerva an ox.]
<[19 Sep.]>	[XIII Kal. Oct.]	For [the birthday of <i>divus</i>] Antoninus [Pius <A.D. 86>, to <i>divus</i> Antoninus an ox.]
<? Sep.>	[? Kal.] Oct.	For the birthday of <i>diva</i> Faustina <c. A.D. 100 or 125>, to <i>diva</i> Faustina a <i>supplicatio</i> .
<[23] Sep.>	[VIII] Kal. [Oct.]	For the birthday of <i>divus</i> [Augustus] <63 B.C.>, to <i>divus</i> Augustus [an ox.] ⁶

1. See 3.4 n.3.
2. An ancient ceremony of the purification of armour (Wissowa (1912) 144; Scullard (1981) 92–4*).
3. The Parilia – see 3.3d n.6 and 5.1c.
4. A ceremony in which the military standards were grouped by the altar and decorated with crowns of roses in the presence of the troops. The significance of the festival is uncertain (cf. Hoey (1937); Fink, Hoey and Snyder (1940) 118–20; Vol. 1, 326; 3.7).
5. I.e. Julius Caesar.
6. The calendar here becomes extremely fragmentary and impossible to translate, but it certainly continued to the end of the year.

3.6 The calendar of the martyrs of Rome (A.D. 354)

In the same book that included the traditional Roman calendar of Filocalus (3.3d) was also a Christian calendar of the martyrs of Rome. This provides a unique insight into the calendar of the fourth-century church. Although there was also a cycle of ceremonies centred on Easter (whose movable date excluded it from the calendar) celebrations at the places of burial of local martyrs provided a central focus for the identity of the Roman church; only three non-Roman martyrs are mentioned and even these seem also to have had memorials in Rome. The identity of the martyrs ranges from the famous (Peter and Paul; five bishops of Rome) to the obscure (Abdon or Semnes) about whom almost nothing is known. This organized commemoration of martyrs probably goes back only to the second half of the third century A.D.; there are no first- or second-century martyrs in the calendar, with the exception of Peter and Paul, whose cult was reorganized in the third century (12.7f(iii–iv)). The celebrations of the martyrs took place in cemeteries, here named after some adjacent road or other landmark, or after the name of the original owner. And it was the

demands of these celebrations that led to the first monumental Christian buildings – that is congregational basilicas at the places of burial (see e.g. 4.15c).

See further: Vol. 1, 378–80; Map 4 (for the location of the roads and cemeteries); Kirsch (1924); Delehaye (1933) 262–99; Valentini and Zucchetti (1940–53) II.17–28 (commentary); Markus (1990) 125–35*; see also Farmer (1987) on the major martyrs.

L. Duchesne, *Liber pontificalis* (Paris 1995) I.10–12; T. Mommsen, *Chronica minora* (Berlin 1892) I.71–2

<25 Dec.>	VIII Kal. Jan.	Christ was born at Bethlehem in Judaea.
<20 Jan.>	XIII Kal. Feb.	<Anniversary> of Fabianus in cemetery of Callistus, and of Sebastian in Catacumbas cemetery.
<21 Jan.>	XII Kal. Feb.	<Anniversary> of Agnes in cemetery on the Nomentana road.
<22 Feb.>	VIII Kal. March	Anniversary of Peter in relation to the seat. ¹
<7 Mar.>	Nones of March.	<Anniversary> of Perpetua and Felicitas in Africa. ²
<19 May>	XIII Kal. June	<Anniversary> of Parthenius and Calocerus in cemetery of Callistus, when Diocletian was consul for the 9th and Maximian for the 8th time <A.D. 304>.
<29 June>	III Kal. July	<Anniversary> of Peter in Catacumbas cemetery, and of Paul in cemetery on Ostian road, when Tuscus and Bassus were consuls <A.D. 258>. ³
<10 July>	VI Ides July	<Anniversary> of Felix and Filippus in cemetery of Priscilla; of Martialis, Vitalis and Alexander in cemetery of Jordani; of Silanus in cemetery of Maximus (the Novatians have stolen this Silanus as martyr); of Januarius in cemetery of Praetextatus. ⁴
<30 July>	III Kal. Aug.	Abdon and Semnes in cemetery of Pontianus near ‘the bear with a cap’.
<6 Aug.>	VIII Ides Aug.	<Anniversary> of Xystus <i.e. Sixtus> in cemetery of Callistus, and of Agapitus and Felicissimus in cemetery of Praetextatus.
<8 Aug.>	VI Ides Aug.	<Anniversary> of Secundus, Carporus, Victorinus and Severianus at Albanum. And on Ostian road at the seventh artillery emplacement <anniversary> of Cyriacus, Largus, Crescentianus, Memmia, Juliana and Ixmarædus <i.e. Smaragdus>.
<10 Aug.>	III Ides Aug.	<Anniversary> of Laurentius at cemetery on Tiburtine road. ⁵

<13 Aug.>	Ides of Aug.	<Anniversary> of Hypolitus at cemetery on Tiburtine road and of Pontianus in cemetery of Callistus.
<22 Aug.>	XI Kal. Sept.	<Anniversary> of Timoteus on Ostian road.
<28 Aug.>	V Kal. Sept.	<Anniversary> of Hermes in cemetery of Basilla on old Salarian road.
<5 Sep.>	Nones of Sept.	<Anniversary> of Acontius at Portus, ⁶ and of Nonnus, Herculanus and Taurinus.
<9 Sep.>	V Ides Sept.	<Anniversary> of Gorgonius in cemetery on Lavicana road. ⁷
<11 Sep.>	III Ides Sept.	<Anniversary> of Protus and Iacintus in cemetery of Basilla.
<14 Sep.>	XVIII Kal. Oct.	<Anniversary> of Cyprian in Africa. At Rome it is celebrated in the cemetery of Callistus.
<22 Sep.>	X Kal. Oct.	<Anniversary> of Basilla on old Salarian road, when Diocletian was consul for the 9th and Maximian for the 8th time <A.D. 304>.
<14 Oct.>	Day before Ides of Oct.	<Anniversary> of Callistus on Aurelian road at third milestone.
<9 Nov.>	V Ides Nov.	<Anniversary> of Clemens, Sempronianus, Claudius (?) and Nicostratus in cemetery by Cavalry Base. ⁷
<29 Nov.>	III Kal. Dec.	<Anniversary> of Saturninus in cemetery of Traso.
<13 Dec.>	Ides of Dec.	<Anniversary> of Ariston at Portus. ⁶

1. An enigmatic entry, which may commemorate the day Peter became first bishop of Rome.
2. See 6.8b, 7.9b.
3. The text here is generally emended on the basis of later calendars to read: '<Anniversary> of Peter on the Vatican and of Paul on Ostian road, and of both at the Catacombs, when Tuscus and Bassus were consuls <A.D. 258>.' But the emendation is not necessary and the text may accurately reflect the situation in 354 (Pietri (1976) 1.366–80). For these memorials see 4.15c; 12.7f(iii–iv).
4. These seven were later believed to be seven sons of one Felicitas. Novatians, followers of one Novatian consecrated as a rival bishop of Rome in A.D. 251, were deemed 'schismatics'; this is the earliest known case of the theft of relics.
5. See further 13.8.
6. Portus was a town on the coast, at the mouth of the Tiber near Ostia, about 30km. from Rome.
7. Probably 'At the Two Laurels' (Map 4 no.21).

3.7 Calendar from Campania (A.D. 387)

This, the last extant inscribed calendar just preceded the emperor Theodosius' removal of official status from non-Christian festivals. But already there was no sacrifice to a god, nor use of a temple specified in the calendar. The details are, however, unclear. Romanus was probably the priest of the province of

Campania in southern Italy, but the role of Felix is obscure (he seems to be a junior official directly responsible to the emperor).

The calendar shows the variety of purely local rituals and the sanctioning of these (maybe minor) festivals by the authority of the emperor himself. The places mentioned are all in the vicinity of Capua, and the inscription may have been put up in the amphitheatre there. We cannot tell over what region the calendar was valid, whether for the whole province or only for the region of Capua.

See further: Vol. 1, 383 n.51; Mommsen, *Gesammelte Schriften* VIII (1913) 14–24; Peterson (1919) 41–4; Cochrane (1940) 330–1*.

ILS 4918; Degrassi (1963) 283

During the administration of Romanus Junior priest
a calendar of the emperors as follows:

<3 Jan.>	III Nones Jan.	<i>Vota</i> .
<11 Feb.>	III Ides Feb.	Genitalia. ¹
<1 May>	Kal. May	Purification at Casilinum by the river. ²
<13 May>	III Ides May	Rose festival in the amphitheatre. ³
<25 July>	VIII Kal. Aug.	Purification at the river at the road to the temple of Diana. ⁴
<27 July>	VI Kal. Aug.	Procession at road of lake Avernus. ⁵
<15 Oct.>	Ides of Oct.	Harvest of Acerusa. ⁶

By order of the emperors Felix fulfilled his vow painstakingly 10 days before the Kalends of December when the consuls were Valentinian (for the third time) and Eutropius <22 Nov. A.D. 387>.

1. These games, held also in Rome, are first attested in the fourth century A.D. They may have been associated with the *genius* of the Roman People.
2. Lustration of the growing crops. Casilinum (modern Capua) lay on the river Volturnus.
3. For rose festivals see 3.5 n.4 and Salzman (1990) 96–9.
4. Purification marking the end of harvest, at the river Volturnus near the temple of Diana Tifatina.
5. Lake Avernus was supposed to lead to the Underworld. Cf. 4.11 n.3.
6. The festival, at nearby Lake Acherusia (Acerusa), was connected with the vintage.

5 Festivals and ceremonies

Ritual solemnity, formal processions, prayers, sacrifice. All these had an important part to play in Roman religious festivals. But so also (just as in our own culture) did less solemn activities: theatrical performances, racing, gift-giving, eating and drinking. Roman festivals were, in fact, strikingly diverse. Some were part of the regular cycle of celebrations prescribed in the Roman calendar (see **chap. 3**); others (although taking place on specific dates, at regular intervals) were never included in that formal calendar of festivals; some were public affairs, involving widespread popular participation; others took place privately, with no ‘official’ ceremonial; some had an origin lost in the earliest history of the city; others were ‘invented’ in much more recent, well-documented times. There was no one type of Roman religious celebration.

This chapter concentrates on the festivals that took place in the city of Rome itself: starting from major celebrations of the official religious calendar (5.1–4), and the contradictory images of conservatism and innovation in those celebrations (5.5), it moves on to the ceremonies of ‘oriental’ deities (5.6), to the religious ceremonial of the games (5.7) and the triumph (5.8). These specifically *Roman* celebrations were, however, just one small part of the religious rituals of the Roman empire as a whole and they were not systematically exported to (or imposed on) conquered provincial communities. Roman soldiers and some Roman citizens resident in the provinces would probably have observed the major religious festivals of the capital with some sacrifice or celebration (note, for example, the religious observances of the Roman *coloniae* – 10.2; or of army units – 3.5). But generally a visitor to a provincial town in Greece or Gaul would not have found the festivals of the city of Rome reproduced on provincial territory; instead a varied range of local ritual customs were practised even under Roman political control.

See further: for brief discussion of all major traditional festivals, Warde Fowler (1899); Scullard (1981)*; for full citation of ancient sources for each regular festival, Degrossi (1963); for *Roman* celebrations outside Rome, Vol. 1, 320–39.

5.1 The Parilia

The festival of the Parilia took place annually on 21 April (see 3.3). It was a ritual concerned with the well-being of flocks and herds, and also, by the late

Republic, associated with the anniversary of Rome’s foundation – as the birthday celebration of the city itself. It is tempting to think of this double significance in terms of a chronological development, from pastoral to political ceremony, and, if that is the case, it shows clearly how an individual festival could take on radically new meanings, even when there was no marked change in the details of the ritual performed. But in fact, the political aspect of the festival may be as old as its pastoral aspect.

See further: Vol. 1, 174–6; Beard (1987); on the deity Pales, Dumézil (1969) 273–87; (1970) 380–5; on the myth and ‘reality’ of an early Roman pastoral society, Ampolo (1988).

5.1a *The festival and its origins*

Ovid here describes some of the rituals of the Parilia, claiming that he himself has performed the ceremony. His description appears to refer both to ceremonies taking place in the city (at which he himself participated) and those celebrated at a local or village level. Ovid also offers various explanations for the origin of the Parilia – ending with an allusion to Rome’s foundation.

Ovid, *Fasti* IV.721–46, 783–806

Night has gone and dawn is appearing. I am called upon to tell of the Parilia – and not called in vain, if kindly Pales grants her favour.¹ Kindly Pales, please grant your favour to one who sings of shepherds’ rites, if I show dutiful respect to your festival. I can assure you, I have often myself borne along, with loaded hands, the ashes of the calf and the beanstalks – the sacred materials of purification; I can assure you, I have personally leapt over the fires, arranged three in a row, and the moist laurel has sprinkled its drops of water over me.² The goddess is moved and grants her favour to my work. My ship is leaving its dock; now my sails find their fair wind. Go, people, and bring from the virginal altar the materials of purification. Vesta will provide them; by Vesta’s generosity you will be pure. The blood of a horse will make up those materials, together with the ashes of a calf; the third ingredient will be the empty stalk of a hard bean.³

(735) Shepherd, purify your well-fed sheep as dusk first falls.⁴ First sprinkle the ground with water and sweep it with a broom; decorate the sheep-pen with leaves and branches fastened upon it; deck out the door and cover it with a long garland. Make blue smoke from pure sulphur, and let your sheep bleat when she is touched by the smoking sulphur. Burn up the wood of male olive trees, pine and juniper; and let the laurel singe and crackle in the middle of the hearth. Put a basket of millet with the millet cakes; the country goddess takes especial pleasure in this kind of food. Add her favourite morsels and a pail of milk, and when the morsels have been cut up, pray to sylvan Pales, with an offering of warm milk.

<After the words of the prayer (asking Pales to protect the cattle and sheep) and further description of the ritual, including the leaping

through the flames of the bonfires, Ovid considers the origins of the festival.>

(783) I have described the custom; it remains for me to set out its origin. The multitude of explanations causes a doubt, and holds back my project at its very start. Devouring fire purifies everything and burns the impurities out of metals; so for that reason it purifies the sheep and their shepherd too. Or is it because those two irreconcilable deities, fire and water, are the opposing principles that make up everything? And for this reason our ancestors joined these elements together and thought it right to touch the body with fire and drops of water? Or is it because the origin of life is contained in these elements, that people regard them as particularly important – and because the exile loses them, because they turn a bride into a wife?⁵ I hardly believe so. There are those who would imagine that the reference is to Phaethon⁶ and Deucalion's flood.⁷ Some also say that, when shepherds were striking rock against rock, a spark suddenly sprang forth; the first spark died, but the second was caught in straw. Is this the reason for the flame at the Parilia? Or did this custom rather derive from the piety of Aeneas, who was given a clear passage by the flames even in his defeat?⁸ Or is it not closer to the truth that, when Rome was founded, orders were given that the household gods be transferred to the new houses; and that, in changing their homes, the farmers set fire to their country houses and the cottages they were about to leave and leapt through the flames with their cattle too? It is a practice that continues even now on your birthday, Rome.⁹

1. The deity associated with the festival is here treated as a goddess (though other accounts imply that Pales was male). Compare the uncertainty over the sex and character of Robigo, 2.2b.
2. The ceremony appears to involve lighting bonfires, scattering materials of purification in the flames and leaping over the fires.
3. *Ideally* (though it could not have been the case in practice, at least not for all participants) the material of purification was supposed to be made by the Vestal Virgins (see 8.4). The ingredients included the ashes of the unborn calves (sacrificed at the ceremony of Fordicidia, 15 April – 3.3a n.4) and the dried blood of a horse (sacrificed at the ceremony of the October Horse, 15 October).
4. At this point, with the address to the 'Shepherd', Ovid seems to move on to the rural version of the festival; see Vol. 1, 175.
5. A man exiled from Rome was formally 'deprived of fire and water'; when the new bride entered her marital home, she was offered fire and water.
6. In Greek mythology, the son of Helios (the sun); he attempted to drive his father's chariot, but was unable to control it and would have set the world on fire had not Zeus/Jupiter put him to death with a thunderbolt.
7. The Greek 'equivalent' of Noah; according to mythological accounts, he survived a world flood by building an ark.
8. Aeneas escaped safely from the blazing city of Troy.
9. Ovid has by now worked round to explanations connected with the founding of Rome. In the following passage he offers a lengthy account of the story of Romulus and Remus.

5.1b *Pastoral festival to political celebration*

Here Plutarch attempts to rationalize the different associations of the Parilia. He suggests two chronological changes: (a) the development of a *pre-Roman* pastoral festival into a festival commemorating the foundation of the city; (b) the introduction of animal sacrifice into a festival which had originally been 'bloodless' (see 6.4).

Plutarch, *Life of Romulus* 12.1

Now it is generally agreed that the foundation of the city took place eleven days before the Kalends of May <21 April>. And this day is celebrated by the Romans with a festival, which they call the birthday of their country. In the beginning, so it is said, they sacrificed no living creature – but thought that they should keep pure and bloodless the festival commemorating the birthday of their country. However, even before the city's foundation, they had a herdsman's festival on that day and they called it 'the Parilia'.

5.1c *The Festival of Rome*

In the second century A.D., the Parilia gained the alternative title 'Romaia' ('Festival of Rome' – see 3.3d and 3.5, both under 21 April). In this passage Athenaeus evokes the noisy celebrations that accompanied the rituals of Rome's birthday.

See further: for the developments under Hadrian, Vol. 1, 257–8; Beaujeu (1955) 128–33.

Athenaeus, *Table-talk* VIII.361 e-f

While the conversation was continuing in this kind of way,¹ right then throughout the whole city was heard the resounding note of the pipes, the clash of the cymbals and the beat of the drums, accompanied by singing. It turned out that it was the festival of the Parilia, as it used to be called – now known as the Romaia, to commemorate the foundation of the temple of the Fortune of the City of Rome by the universally greatest and most cultured emperor Hadrian. That day is celebrated each year as a special occasion by all the inhabitants of Rome and by those staying in the city.

1. The dramatic setting is a dinner-table conversation in a house at Rome.

5.2 *The Lupercalia*

The festival of the Lupercalia (marked in calendars on 15 February) presents us with even more difficult problems of interpretation than the Parilia. Ancient accounts of what happened during the ritual do not vary much – though they do not agree on the route taken by the naked, or near-naked runners, who raced around the city. But writers offer very different, sometimes contradictory,